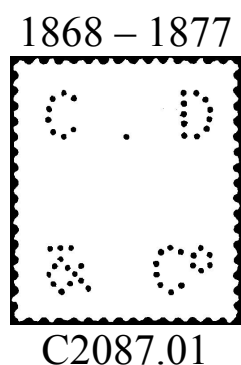


CHARLES DEVAUX & Co

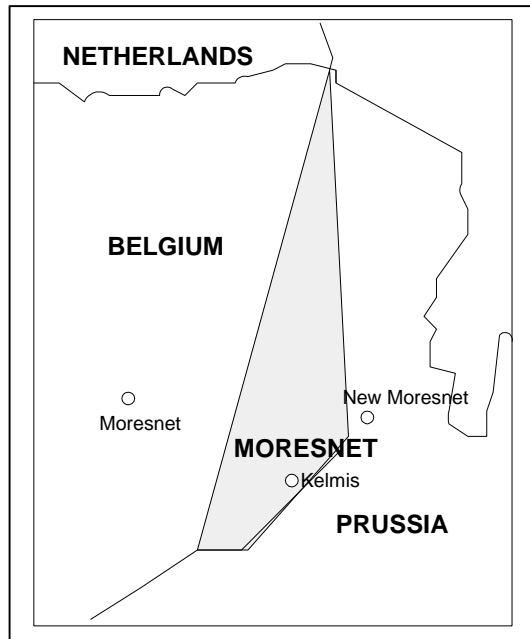
Maurice Harp

Charles Devaux and Co was one of the earliest of Sloper's customers. They used the die C2087.01 C.D/&Co that has been recorded used as early as February 19th 1869 and is one of the few dies in the new illustrated catalogue listed being shown as dating from 1868. However we know little of the company. Charles Devaux & Co was listed in an 1841 London directory as general merchants and by 1865 was listed as not only general merchants but as agents for La Vieille Montagne Zinc Mining Co and Bureau Veritas (International). By 1884 they were back to being listed just as general merchants and by 1895 the company appears to have gone out of business.



So it seems that by the time they started using perfin dies they were a well-established and successful company. However as can be seen from the directory references and the dates of use of the die the company must have fallen on hard times and went out of existence in the early 1890's.

It turns out that their agency work may have contributed to their downfall. La Vieille Montagne Zinc Co is the name of a former zinc mine in Kelmis (La Calamine), a town in Belgium between Liège and Aachen. The mine's name is French for "the old mountain", and this is also reflected in its German name Altenburg. The mine was once a bone of contention between Prussia on the one side and Netherlands and later Belgium on the other, resulting in the mine and village being declared as the neutral territory of Moresnet. The territory occupied a total of just 1400 acres. The mine was first opened in 1805 and



continued until 1885 when the mine was exhausted. The company opened a second zinc mine in Zinkgruvan in Sweden which is still apparently in operation today. The company also ran a harbour in Ammeberg to ship the zinc. After the demise of the zinc mine the territory toyed with other ways of creating and income including the production of stamps. However, finally the state of Moresnet ceased to exist when invaded by Germany in the First World War.